The British Labor Movement.

ARTICLE 5.

Workingclass Education

LONDON—At the present time two campaigns are endorsed by the British Labor Movement with respect to improved working-class educatjonal standards. One is for democratization of education in general with the total elimination of illiteracy as its first objective, and the ultimate aim that lack of money or social standing shall not prevent any boy or girl from receiving university traning, if he or she desires to pursue studies to far.

The other campaign directed at the immediate necessity rather than the future ideal, is the one now receiving the most omphasis. It is the work which is being done by correspondence classes and trade union schools and colleges to train men and women of the present generation for executive position in the labor movement of today.

Of the organizations now engaged in training their students to be more efficient workers in the labor movement the Labor College at London, Ruskin College at Oxford, and the Workers' Educational Association, which penetrates all sections of the country, are easily the most important. There are fundamental differences between each of the three but they are identical in their aim of making cheap and uncontrolled educational facilities available to the adult working class.

Ruskin College, the oldest of the three mentioned, was founded in 1899 for the purpose of providing education in the social sciences for working-class students and it is interesting that the establishment funds were originally provided by two Americans, Mr. and Mrs. Walker Vrooman. From the beginning Ruskin College has maintained an absolute independence of outside control which makes it a landmark in the history of education. Courses are chosen and methods of tuition regulated by the discretion of the faculty alone. The college is a successful experiment in the field of academic freedom. But because of this stoutly maintained independence Ruskin College is subjected to a fire of hostile criticism from two quarters. Those who believe that education and educators should be under the control of capitalist boards of trustees regard it as a dangerous tool of revolution, while those who are wholehearted revolutionists continually criticize Ruskin as not sufficiently class-conscious in its teaching.

The latter argument is never advanced against the Labor College in London, formerly known as the Central Labor College. This institution was established in 1909 by groups formerly affiliated with Ruskin College which had come to believe that the latter had become too academic and "neutral". Founded expressly to fill the need of an educational institution teaching nothing but revolutionary Socialism the Labor College has gone steadily ahead on this deal. It is 100 per cent class-conscious in inspiration and teaching and it holds as consistently as do the I. W. W. to the first clause of its constitution, which reads: —"the college to be based upon the recognition of the antagonism of interest between capital and labor."

In spite of this gulf between the procedure of the two colleges they are both integral parts of the labor movement and each derivos its financial support at the present time from trade union contributions. On the governing council of Ruskin College are found officers of the Weavers' Union, the Northumberland Miners, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Cooperative Union, and the General Federation of Trade Unions. The Labor College is owned and controlled entirely by two radical and very powerful unions — the South Wales' Miners' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen. The general opinion in the labor movement is that in spite of the sharp differences in the two institutions there is room and to spare for both; that the Labor College graduates do invaluable work in stimulation and strenthening the industrial side of the labor movement in preparation for the advent of the Socialist state, and that the Ruskin College graduates are not less valuable as educated men and women fitted for constructive leadership in general service under that state.

As might be expected the curriculum of Ruskin College is much broader than that of the Labor College, which pays little attention to anything but straight Marxian Socialism and its offshoots. Marx is in no way minimized at the former institution, but his teachings are there regarded as a phase rather than the center of economic and industrial history. At the Labor College everything is subordinated to turning effective propagandists. Ruskin is as careful that its graduates should remain in the labor movement, but aims to fit every student for the full realization of his possibilities rather than to make him merely an agitator. In bringing about the overthrow of Capitalism the Labor College will be the more effective of the two. In insuring that Socialism, once established, is maintained in England Ruskin will do the best work.

At both institutions the number of students in residence is no criterion of influence. Each college has about thirty boarders, mostly maintained on scholarshops by the supporting trade unions. The Labor College also has about sixty day students and plans to open a dormitory for women boarders. Ruskin has recetly opened its Womens' Hotel, and counting the new women trade unionist students, has thereby increased its student roll to forty. The full-time course at each college takes two years.

A large part of the influence of both institutions comes from the correspondence classes conducted by the college faculties with groups of workers in various sections of the country for negligible fees. Over 11,000 men and women have taken advantage of the correspondence classes offered by Ruskin as against the 600 odd graduates of the college. The Labor College has a large number of correspondence classes in operation and in addition assists in the setting up of local labor classes in which its graduates frequently serve as instructors. There are now about 300 of these classes in different parts of Great Britain (mostly in South Wales) with an average membership of thirty to a class. These local classes are endorsed and supported by the local unions of the railwaymen and the Walsh miners in the same manner as the parent Labor College is backed by the national unions. Important work has also been done by the governing council of Ruskin College by summoning conferences at which special industrial problems are discussed from the working class viewpoint. Lectures are given frequently at both colleges by leaders in various phases of the labor movement.

Also of very great importance in British working class education is the organization known as the Workers' Educational Assotiation (W. E. A.) founded by a small group of trades unionists and cooperators in 1903. The W. E. A. consists of about 2500 small groups of workers affiliated into 200 branches. It is under the governance of joint committees of labor men and representatives of the faculties of different English and Scotch universities and through correspondence and tutorial classes has to some extent thrown open the educational resources of Great Britain to the working classes. A striking feature of the W. E. A. is that the subjects on which instruction is given are those subjects which the working class members decide for themselves they want to study, — not on those subjects which educational authorities think the workers ought to study.

The result of this organization has been the formation of adult classes all over England. There are about 1.00 members of the W. E. A., all of them from the working class. While the Association has no official connection with the Labor Movement it is serving not only to educate but to quicken the social consciousness of the working class. The W. E. A. backed by the labor movement, is at present urging state adoption of an advanced educational program of which the first resolution is "that the broad principle of free education through all its stages, including that of the University, be adopted", and including a demand that labor shall have direct representation on all educational governing bodies.

The importance of working class education is now generally recognized by the British Labor Movement, and big developments in this line may be looked for during the next few years. There has been a great revival since the war, — a Scottish Labor College on the lines of the London Labor College has been established in Glascow and others are in contemplation, as soon as finances permit. In addition, so great is the influence of labor in the British government at present, it is not unlikely that state aid will in the near future be given students who are financially unable to take up studies at Ruskin or the Labor College in London.

Ruminations of a Rebel.

By Tom. Clifford.

The judge who presided at the trial of Comrade Benjamin Gitlow just couldn't forbear expressing his thanks to the jury in returning a verdict of guilty. He has probably warmed the "bench" so long as to be incapable of seeing any other side to a proposition than that which will safeguard the interests and perpetuate the rule of those on whom he is dependent for his job. From his viewpoint the institutions erected by the bourgeoisie are the final word in civilization and no opposition thereto is to be countenanced and propose a change in the inenanced. Anyone who has the temerity to question the present status of soterests of the common weal is adjudged a dangerous character and promptly consigned to a penal institution. He knows nothing but the law, and his mental obliquity makes him a stranger to "horse sense." No thinking man has any respect for a judge these days, for they know he is on the bench to interpret the law in conformity with ruling class interests. Being either a fool or knave, it is impossible for him to administer real justice. One may charitably excuse the stupidity of the jury, but only contempt can be expressed for a man who poses as an intellectual and manifests all the charactoristics of an ignoramus. This particular judge runs true to form in his fulsome laudation of the assininity displayed by the twelve boneheads who decided Comrade Gitlow was guilty—of idealism. The courts of today are a screaming force. Don't believe it? Ask any lawyer who dares express an honest opinion.

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The Y. W. C. A. convention, which convened in Cleveland last week gets all "het up" over a pamphlet issued by big business entitled "Will the Y. W. C. A. Co-operate or Will It Antagonize?" It appears that the convention had under consideration an industrial program which contains demands obnoxious to the "plutes" and the organization is warned that favorable action on the same will be followed by the withdrawal of the financial support hitherto so generously given. Well, well. Another sign of the breaking up of the old order. Here is an organization created by the bourgeoisie for the express purpose of drawing a red herring across the path of the working class — by diverting their minds from the consideration of material problams to the contemplation of the joys coming to them in the "sweet after while"—evidencing a disposition to refuse to obey orders. Of course it is rank ingratitude, but prolongation of its existence seems to make the new departure a necessity. The bourgeoisie are utterly unable to grasp the fact that in the evolution of society nothing stays "put." The Y. W. C. A. finds itself in the midst of revolutionary forces that are making for a change in the social structure, and it must face them or sink into oblivion. The bourgeoisie are having rough sailing these days. The storm signals are becoming more and more numerous, presaging an ultimate social tempest that will rock the capitalist State to its very foundations. The Y. W. C. A. is simply noting the signals and is running to cover. Safety first. The industrial program was adopted, and the first vice president, a daughter of old Jay Gould, of Wall Street fame some years ago, promptly resigned, thus displaying loyalty to her class.

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And now comes Henry Chamberlin, director of the new Chicago Crime Commission, and deposes that criminals are using "business efficiency" methods in the practice of their profession, in which they are aided by criminal lawyers and crooked politicians, and practically admits there is no remedy. How marvellously perfect is the capitalist system!

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The news has filtered out of Washington that the U. S. Government has served notice on its Allies that if an immediate concerted movement is not made to open up trade with Russia it will act independently. Getting hungry for trade, eh! The bourgeoise of America must have markets for their surplus in the near future if they are to avoid an unpleasantness that they dread. Perhaps they have waited too long. Our "noble ally," England, has not been so busy suppressing the Irish rebellion that she couldn't spare the time to pre-empt the Russian trade. She didn't wait for the consent of her comrades in arms, but followed her usual policy of getting while the getting was good. When it comes to securing trade the English bourgeois is "all to the mustard."

A resolution has been introduced in the lower House of Congress to impeach Louis Post, Secretary of Labor, the outgrowth of a scrap between the Departments of Justice and Labor. Everybody seems to be wearing their fighting clothes these days. Even the politicians are unable to work in harmony. The Presidential candidates are anything but exemplars of the Golden Rule. They are accusing each other of duplicity and lavish use of money. The hopeful sign is that the great mass of the people are paying no attention to them notwithstanding the columns of advertising they are getting in the newspapers. And, best of all, the workers are evidencing their discontent through the only avenue available—the strike.

Who Are The Criminals?

— By Perle Doc —

Nineteen hundred years ago an agitator was nailed to a cross until he was dead because he preached doctrines that were "dangerous". He was declared to be an "undesirable", and the courts adjudged him a criminal. Who committed the crime? Was judges who convicted the Christ to it Jesus? or was it the lawmakers and capital punishment?

Three hundred years ago Galileo was sentenced to life imprisonment for saying that the earth moved round the sun. Who were the criminals? Galileo? or the lawmakers and judges who condemned this great scientist and teacher to prison?

In 1692, at Salem Massachusetts, a dozen or so poor old women were swung upon the gallows, convicted by the courts of witchcraft. Who committed the crime? Did the lawmakers and the prosecutors and the judges who sent those women to their death commit a crime?

Up to 1860 in the South the ruling class declared it a crime to teach slaves to read and write. Who were the criminals? The men and women who defied that law? or the lawmakers and judges who solemnly decreed education to be a felony?

Today Eugene Debs lies in jail for opposing war. Roger Baldwin has suffered the prison cell for refusing to be a conscript. Who are the criminals? Is it the men and women who today lie wretched behind the grated door for their conscience' sake? or is it the law makers, and the prosecutors, and the judges, who declare such men as Debs and Baldwin to be felons? Who brand such women as Kate O'Hare and Rose Pastor Stokes as criminals?

Is not a government that commits such acts a criminal government? Is not every government official responsible for such acts a criminal?

Not Jesus, but Pilate was the real criminal. Not Galileo, but his judges trying to suppress a revolutionary truth. It was the southern slave holders, forbidding education to the black man, who had the criminal intent. Eugene Debs, and Roger Baldwin, and Rose Stokes are not criminals. It is the lawmakers, trying to out law new ideas, it is the judges, trying to shield a criminal robber class by putting honest men in jail, they are the real culprits.

TWO VIEWS.

By Scott Nearing.

Soviet Russia is under the ban. The American Eagle is screaming her note of triumph to the clouds. All is ended, according to the papers, and sovietism is cast forever into the outer darkness!

Just a moment, please, before the decree is made irrevocable. Note this dispatch from the correspondent of The Manchester Guardian in which he describes the work that the soviet government is doing for its children—nursing mothers are the object of special care; they are still assisted as the precious child grows older; then there are children's palaces with facilities for recreation and education; then there are the reorganized schools and the colleges and universities, all designed to prepare the Russian child for future usefulness. All of these measures Russia has adopted in the two years following the revolution, and she has done them despite the war, despite the blockade, despite the immanence of destruction. In her darkest hour, Russia was busy caring for her children.

Now for the capitalist nations that have been seeking to blot Russia out of existence—one of the first acts in Great Britain and France, after war assumed serious proportions, was to let down on the work of education. In the United States, during the years from 1915 to 1918, when the cost of living came near to doubling, teachers' salaries, according to an estimate recently published by the United States 16 per cent. With this increase, their commissioner of education, rose about average salary was $630.64, making their average monthly salary about $53.

These figures lead to some interesting reflections on the relative rewards given to teachers and to those employed in certain other lines of activity. The railroad wage commission, in its recommendations for wage increases to the 16 lowest paid branches of the service, suggested wages of less than $700 per year for only two classes of employes—"messengers and attendants" and "section men." In New York city, where teachers salaries are comparatively high, the elementary school teachers receive practically the same wages as butchers, chauffeurs, clerks, waiters, etc., few of whom require anything like the period of preparation for thier work that is demanded of teachers.

A recent report shows that in the territory centering about Cleveland and Chicago, head bakers receive $363 more per year than teachers; blacksmiths receive $890 more, and machinist $1,138 more. Equal discrepancies appear if the salaries of teachers are compared with the incomes received by those who are engaged in other professions. Insofar as a financial return can serve as a deterrent or as a stimulus to enter a profession, the United States is doing everything possible to discourage young men and women of ability from entering the teaching profession.

Special provisions for expectant mothers? Maternity insurance? Children's palaces? They exist here only in the most rudimentary form.

Soviet Russia rewards those who produce children. Capitalist America rewards those who produce wealth. In the long years that are ahead—in the estimation of the future—which system will stand highest—the one that produced steel rails and textiles, or the one that produced men?

Two views of life are contending for supremacy in the world — one places the emphasis on profit; the other on service. In one view it is property that is sacred, in the other it is humanity.

Never yet have men drawn blood from stones.

The Black Sheep.

Chapt. XXVIII.

The Home of the Spirit

Jack cashed his check and paid his bill at the boarding house after which he left the mining town of Mullen and made his way in the direction of Couer D' Alane Lake, where he knew that Collins and Rudolph awaited him. The distance before him was about sixty five miles down the river and he decided to walk it and study the country at first hand. It was in reality a new world to him. It was the books made real.

The trail over which he travelled ran along the mountain side; it was not a road; wheeled vehicles could not pass over it. It was a short cut through the mountains, used by the prospectors to get to their claims. These men hauled their provisions to their little mines real or imaginary, on their backs or on the backs of horses, mules or burros. This mode of transportation neded but a narrow trail and such it was. It went up and down and in and out among the rocks and ledges, down thru wooded ravines and up over barren ridges and at this time of the year alternately thru banks of snow and dark evergreen forests. It was a region of the profoundest silence, hardly the chirp of a bird broke the stillness. The boy had a feeling that he walked in an unmeasured immensity filled with grandeur and beuty.

At every turn of the trail he met with things of which he had read in books. Some of these he recoguized at sight and they helped his mind to understand others of which the books had not spoken. Literally he roamed thru the pages of the book of eternity, a book not written by men but traced by the fingers of Truth upon the stratified rocks of the earth's crust. It was as if Pluto in his restless moments had raised these strata from the deep, in order that men might see and read the wondrous story of this earth's pre-human ages, when pterodactyl cleaved the air and horrid monsters crawled in steaming swamps.

He walked as in a trance, forgetting everything for the time being but the wonders which obtruded themselves upon his sight. Occassionally he wished that George and Herman, Collins and Rudolph could be with him, he thought that they would be as enraptured as he. In this he was mistaken. This was the home of his spirit not theirs. These mountains, crags, rocks, ridges, ledges, ravines, woods, and all they contained were food to the soul of the naturalist; they were merely interesting to his friends whose souls fed on social problems and phenomena. Even as the social phenomena which he had observed had interested him but they had never called him in a way that these natural phenomena called him.

It had snowed the night before he had left Mullen and in those windless mountains the snow piles itself up on every twig and branch to a considerable height causes all nature to appear like sculptured down. The mountains and woods were clothed in an almost ethereal beauty giving to the boy's mind asthetic as well as scientific food. No wonder then that after he was a mile on his way he forgot the miners at Mullen the stories of strikes and bullpens, of gunmen and hired thugs, of the lewd viciousness of bar keepers and the dwellers of the redlight. These belonged to a strange world as far as he was concerned. Industrial life was to him an alien world. He could make himself at home in it when necessary. In a way that a Chinaman may feel at home in America; but given the opportunity the Chinaman will go back to China and the Americans goes back to America and the spirit of back to America and the spirit of coming thrill when he buried himself in the vastness of the Couer D'Alane. He was the natural, it would be better to say the nature loving instead of the industrial type.

The warm winds from the Pacific ocean came up the valley and slowly but steadily melted the snows. It was as if monstrous invisible hands slowly but steadly rolled back the vast white blanket from the depths of the canyon up the mountainside. Slowly but steadily the stately evergreens shed their silvery down and stod out in wondrous beauty against their alabaster environment. Here and there on the mountain side hung great white banks of fog like titanic ghosts endeavoring to embrace the mountains. The sky was over cast with the soft grey film of clouds thru which the sun occassionally shot a beam of golden light illumining these great ramparts of nature which divide the continent, georgraphically as well as climatically.

The trail over which he passed ran along the river sometimes very near it and then again up over ridges which took him a couple of hours to climb. Ever and anon he would pass a deserted cabin near which would be found a tunnel or shaft more or less caved in and dilapidated. These were monuments to the lost hopes of the prospectors; that race of mining pioneers who spend their all in delving after every little mineral trace in the hope of finding a mine which will lift them out of the ranks of common men and enthrone them in the seats of the mighty. On several occassions he turned from his trail and wandered into these tunnels not in the hope of finding what the prospectors might have over looked in the way of minerals; but rather to find out in what particular formation these men hoped to discover mines. In what particular rocks men so persistently sought their fortunes and lost their substance. While on this strail for the time being he lost all idea of seeking a job or getting an education in school. He was in school now and Nature, the master of masters, was teaching him some of his most wonderful secrets.

At six thirty in the morning he had started and now it was late in the afternoon upon a long mountain slope. He was at least six thousand feet above the valley as he stood on the crest of the ridge of the last back bone. It was a step descent the trail continually doubling upon itself in such a way that one had to travel five miles for two. On this the snow was deep but the trail had been broken by a company of prospectors who had preceeded him. He felt slightly tired and not a little hungry for he had eaten no lunch and he had not stopped to calculate how much farther it would be to the next town. He sat down by the side of the trail on a fallen log and used about twenty minutes to note what he had seen in a little book which he kept in his pocket for that purpose. It was while engaged in this work that he noticed a crackling of dry twigs and a swaying of brush and then to his surprise right in the trail not more than a hundred and fifty feet from him stood a magnificant bul elk. It was the first elk he had ever seen. He sat motionless noting its every movement until it left the trail and dissaperared into the woods. Forgetting that he was hungry and far from the nearest human habitation he now left the trail and followed the monarch of the wild, wishing that he was the possessor of a camera and under his breath telling the auburned haired girl who was nearly two thousand miles away all that he might learn about the habits of this noble beast.

He noticed that the elk made its way against the wind and at the same time down the slope. It was evidently anxious to get out of the deep snow and into the open timber. It did not go very fast as it had to wade well up to its knees and Jack plunged thru the soft snow almost up to his hips. Occassionally the big bull would stop, sniff the air as if it scented danger. It would even double on its tracks and walk back up the slope a distance of a hundred feet or more and then resume its downward course. Jack was in hopes that this beast would join a herd somewhere in the woods below but when he reach the snowline and the open woods there was no way of tracking the elk and what was more night overtook him. It now occurred to him that he had lost the trail even if he should climb the mountain again he was not sure that he could find it as he would not be able to follow his own track in the dark. He realized that he was lost. There was nothing to do but camp for the night.

He found a place between two fallen trees which he could cover over with bark and make himself a hut. He broke off a lot of fur boughs and arranged them in the form of a bed under this bark shed. He now gathered a pile of wood and bark in front of his rudely constructed shelter whose side walls were fallen logs and started a fire of bark and pitchwood and settled down for the night. He was quite oblivious of the fact that he had had no material supper and that he was not likely to have breakfast the next morning. By the light of the fire he wrote in his note book an imaginary letter to the girl in far off Dakota. It was for him an unusual effort and he composed it slowly and methodically in a way that he would not have written to her if he had considered this to be a real letter.

"My Dear Miss Anderson", he began, "we have only met twice,—you don't even know my name and I only know your father's name. So you see it is not really proper for me to write to you or for you to write to me. Be that as it may—if you were in my position tonight you would want to write to some one and naturally you would write to the one of whom you thought most frequently. You would doubtlessly write just what you would feel and if we always did that we would always write wonderful letters. We often feel wonderful things but we don't write them and we don't say them because we believe we are the only ones who feel such emotions. And because we think we are alone in out feelings it is so hard to become acquainted with each other. So in this letter which you will never see I'm going to throw off the brakes and let 'er slide.

First I must tell you where I am and how I came to be here (no I'm not in prison) I am lost. Not lost in the religious sense I hope altho I'm near a fire of my own kindling. I am lost in the woods. It sounds romantic does it not? How did it happen? I shall tell you. I have been at work in the mines for a while and decided to go back to the little cabin by the lake and spend the rest of the winter with my friends. With this in mind I undertook a sixty mile journey on foot. It is a wonderful walk thru a wonderful land. Ever since morning my mind has drunk from a perpetual fountain of wonders which I shall not stop to describe for I have neither time, light, or material with which to write a book. Besides no words of mine could do justice to the undefiled work of nature. I could only wish that you were with me and could have seen what I have seen then I know you would feel as I feel as I lie upon this bed of fir boughs between two fallen trees covered over with a roof of cedar bark and by a pitch wood fire.

How did I get lost? It is very simple I was sitting on a log writing down something about a peculiar ledge of rock when a big elk crossed the trail just ahead of me. Of course I was curious where he was going and what he would do, so I followed him. I noticed that he was going against the niwd. I suppose that enales him to dectect his enemines and I also noticed that he stopped several times and looked back. He may have been aware that something followed him. It also may be due to his wild instinct of self preservation These animals know their enemies and the ways of their enemies. I followed him until darkness overtook me and so here I am.

O yes, I 'll find my way out. This letter will not be found amongst my bones. I know that I am on the west side of the mountains and I also know that every rivulet flows into a creek and every creek flows into a river and

(Continued on page 4.)